

## **SESSION 4**



**BECOMING COURAGEOUS IN THE FIGHT**

## 1. When We Leave the Quiet, We Enter the Arena

**A. In the arena, our world, we have an intimidating enemy who is set against us.**

**1 Peter 5:8:** “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

**B. People today often scoff at the idea of a personal devil.**

- What do you think? Is he real?
- Just know this: the devil doesn't need you to believe in him. In fact, if you dismiss him, all the better for him in tempting, confusing, and misleading your life.

**C. When we step out into the arena of everyday life, we must be alert and ready to do battle with this sinister opponent.**

## 2. Satan's Strategy of Engagement

**A. The devil's chief strategy is one of deception.**

**John 8:44:** “... there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.”

- Below are some of the lies Satan uses against us:

**B. “I can satisfy you.”**

- Temptation promises satisfaction and often delivers it in the moment. But this thrill is only temporary. Soon the satisfaction sours and is replaced by guilt, regret, and emptiness.

**James 1:15:** “When lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.”

- Only Jesus can offer the satisfaction we really want.

**John 6:35:** “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst.’”

**C. “There won't be any consequences.”**

- Temptation only mentions the benefits of an action while ignoring the consequences. It promises pleasure, but it pays with pain. It leads to a “less than” life. And often, we hurt someone we love.

**Romans 6:23:** “For the wages of sin is death ...”

**D. “You can be free.”**

- Temptation will promise freedom but it's actually a trap. We end up enslaved.

**Romans 6:16:** “You can be a slave to sin, which leads to death, or you can choose to obey God, which leads to righteous living.”

**E. “God would want you to have this.”**

- God would not want anything for us that will lead us away from life.

**James 1:13:** “When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone to evil.”

**F. “God is holding out on you.”**

- We often say “yes” to temptation because we fear we are going to miss out. But the real miss of life is when we fail to trust God for our needs. **Philippians 4:19:** “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

### 3. The Pull of Temptation to Sin

#### A. Temptation typically starts with a thought.

- The thought might be, “I need that” or “I deserve some fun” or “Everyone else does it.”

#### B. The next phase happens in your imagination.

- We start to think about the leftover chocolate cake, or your friend who can get you “those” pills, or the website you know you shouldn’t go to but want to.

#### C. Next comes justification.

- We know you shouldn’t, so you come up with reasons why you should. “It’s not that big a deal.” “No one’s perfect.” “What’s a little fun going to hurt?” “Just this once.”

#### D. Finally, we make the choice to sin.

### 4. How to Fight with Sin and Win

#### A. The first step is to identify our signature sin(s).

- We can’t defeat an enemy we can’t or won’t name.
- We need to call out our weaknesses “in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.” **2 Corinthians 2:11 (NIV)**
- What temptations pull at you the most? Which sins do you tend to give in to?

#### B. The second step is to create a winning strategy for dealing with our sin(s).

- Sometimes our best response for overcoming a temptation is to flee from it.

**2 Timothy 2:22:** “Flee the evil desires of youth.”

**1 Corinthians 6:18:** “Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”

- Sometimes our best move is to run from temptation ... literally!  
**Genesis 39:11-12:** “But one day, when he went into the house to do his work and none of the men of the house was there in the house, she caught him by his garment, saying, “Lie with me.” But he left his garment in her hand and fled and got out of the house.”
- Sometimes we can’t flee, so we have to face the temptation head on and fight it.

**Ephesians 6:17:** We need to fight with a weapon that has divine power and can take our thoughts captive and make them obey Jesus. What is that

weapon? Remember, we learned our weapon is “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”.

**Romans 12:2:** God tell us we need to “be transformed by the renewing of your mind”

When we renew our minds with the truth of Scripture, we “come to our senses and escape from the trap of the devil ...” (**2 Timothy 2:26**).

Then when we yield to the truth of the Bible rather than to the lies attacking us, Jesus says, “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (**John 8:32**).

**C. The third step is to enlist the help and encouragement of other men.**

- Every man needs a “Band of Brothers” in his life to provide support and accountability.
- Brothers can help us stand back up and recover when we fall to sin.  
**James 5:16:** “Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”  
**Ecclesiastes 4:9-10:**  
“Two are better than one ... for if either of them falls, the one will lift up his companion. But woe to the one who falls when there is not another to lift him up.”
- Brothers can strengthen us when we are weak and struggling with temptation.  
**Galatians 6:2:** “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.”
- Brothers can provide sound wisdom for establishing a right way forward.  
**Proverbs 27:17:** “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
- Brothers are a “must have” for any man who wants to become a BetterMan in the arena of everyday life.

## Your Table Discussion Questions

1. In what area of life have you most felt you were fighting with the devil? How would you describe that fight?
2. Below are three “case studies” of men struggling with sin for your group to discuss.

Take no more than 10 minutes for each case study and talk over a “spiritual strategy” that could be used to help each man gain victory over the problem described. What Scriptures could you call on to speak into each man’s situation? What practical advice would you offer each man to consider? What resources (books, podcasts, counselors, etc.) could you recommend? What role could friends play to help each man deal with his situation?

- Man #1 is being pressured at work to be involved in an unethical business deal. He has a good paying job, but fears he may lose it if he refuses to participate. How should he face this hard spot? What's his spiritual strategy? Discuss.
- Man #2 has been captured by pornography. How can he break free of this addictive sin? What should be his spiritual strategy? Discuss.
- Man #3 needs to be more of a spiritual leader at home. Unfortunately, he lacks confidence and holds back. Now his ongoing spiritual passivity is frustrating his wife and hurting his marriage and family. So how can he break out of this passivity and step up to a more engaged leadership role? What's his spiritual strategy? Discuss.

## **Your “BetterMan” Question**

Before our next session, take a moment this week to reflect on your notes, and then answer the following question: What possible action step could I take from this session that could make me a better man? Write your answer in the space below.